



JAMES A. NOYES, Director

COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS

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March 20, 2003

IN REPLY PLEASE

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TO: Each Supervisor

FROM: James A. Noyes
Director of Public Works

INFRASTRUCTURE REPORT CARD BOARD MOTION OF FEBRUARY 18, 2003, SYNOPSIS 61

At the February 18, 2003, meeting, your Board requested Public Works and Parks and Recreation to investigate the information contained in the Los Angeles County Infrastructure Report Card prepared by the Los Angeles Section of the American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE).

ASCE is a national engineering society with more than 125,000 members. The Los Angeles Section has nearly 4,000 members in ten Southern California counties. I am a member of ASCE and served on the Executive Committee responsible for developing and publicizing the Infrastructure Report Card. A study group of civil engineers was convened in November 2001 to assess the condition of our region's infrastructure. Participants included the Cities of Los Angeles, Glendale, Santa Clarita, Azusa, Pasadena, Long Beach, and Santa Monica, Caltrans, Los Angeles Department of Water and Power, Metropolitan Water District, Ports of Los Angeles and Long Beach, County Sanitation Districts, Metropolitan Transportation Authority, and private engineering firms. Study group members gathered information from published reports, database information, and surveys and assigned letter grades.

A number of park and recreation facilities throughout Los Angeles County were reviewed, and an overall grade of C+ was assigned to this category. None of the facilities reviewed actually belong to the Los Angeles County Department of Parks and Recreation. However, the Department does not object to or disagree with the C+ rating. In fact the Department has identified over \$400 million in unmet renovation needs for existing infrastructure. Your Board has directed the Chief Administrative Office to submit a report on the condition of facilities under the control of Parks and Recreation. This report will be submitted by April 2004.

To parallel the ASCE Report Card, which assessed infrastructure conditions Countywide, we have prepared a Report Card focusing on County-owned or maintained facilities. The overall grade for facilities is a B-, which is higher than the overall ASCE grades for Los Angeles County, Orange County, and the nation. County-owned or maintained infrastructure was graded higher in almost every category. See Attachment A for a relative assessment of the condition of County-owned or maintained infrastructure.

In order to bring County-owned or maintained infrastructure up to an overall grade of A, it is estimated that an initial investment of between \$45 and \$290 billion would be necessary. This wide range is largely due to the uncertainty of costs to improve urban and stormwater runoff quality. The annual investment costs necessary to maintain the infrastructure at a grade of A is estimated to range from \$235 to \$335 million. See Attachment B for funding required for each category of infrastructure.

Although the attached Report Card for Los Angeles County facilities describes the condition and funding needs for County-owned or maintained infrastructure, there are a few areas that merit special mention. Following the Loma Prieta earthquake in 1989, the Local Seismic Safety Retrofit Program identified 35 County-owned bridges to be seismically retrofitted by the County. Twenty-nine of these bridges have been completed utilizing Federal and State funding. The State 20 percent local match for the remaining six bridges is not guaranteed due to State budget constraints.

For some infrastructure the "hardware" is in good shape, but the overall grade is low because of other deficiencies. For example, in grading streets and highways, pavement condition is good, but congestion brings the grade down. Studies are underway in each of your Districts to determine where congestion most severely impacts service and what improvements are required for mitigation. Upon analyzing the results and securing funding, projects will be constructed to relieve congestion. In our waterworks districts, the age of the systems varies widely so that the overall grade for the "hardware" is an average of poor facilities at one location and good facilities at another.

To increase the D grade for Urban Runoff will be extremely costly. As you know, exact costs are a matter of great debate. The USC study has estimated costs ranging from \$43 to \$283 billion just to implement the anticipated Total Maximum Daily Load requirements alone. The County's share of the ultimate true costs is significant and beyond our current budgets. The uncertainty in regulation, water quality science, and cost to comply with requirements contribute to the low grade for Urban Runoff.

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As part of Public Works' Strategic Plan, we identified "Quality of the County's Infrastructure" as a critical issue. Our Action Plan 1, Infrastructure Assessment, calls for the development of a capital management system for identification and prioritization of infrastructure needs. This Action Plan links to the County Strategic Plan Goal 4, Fiscal Responsibility, Strategy 2: "By January 31, 2006, implement plan to preserve and protect the County's critical public infrastructure."

Specific recommendations for infrastructure improvements are in the attached Report Card for Los Angeles County facilities. The majority of the recommendations concern funding. To repair and rehabilitate existing infrastructure and construct additional critically needed infrastructure will take a substantial increase in funding. Therefore, I recommend that your Board consider adding infrastructure as a separate goal in the County Strategic Plan.

If you have any questions regarding this matter, please contact me or your staff may contact Brian Sasaki, Deputy Director, at (626) 458-4008.

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Attach.

cc: American Public Works Association, Southern California Chapter
American Society of Civil Engineers, Los Angeles Section
Chief Administrative Office
Department of Parks and Recreation
Executive Office